
EERE Project Management Center News
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This newsletter is intended to keep stakeholders of the U.S. Department of Energy's Project Management Center (PMC) informed of emerging topics of interest. John and I encourage states and other stakeholders to contact us at the above e-mail addresses with story ideas and/or articles you would like to see or discuss.

Newsletter design: Several of you have commented on the lackluster format of this newsletter; we couldn't agree more. We are currently working to format and produce it in HTML; this will allow us to improve the layout, use occasional graphics, and incorporate links that will let you jump directly from the article index to whatever interests you most.

Stay tuned, and thanks for your patience.

Featured articles in this issue:

- Check your registration with grants.gov
- Apply for next round of Energy Savings Assessments
- EERE takes a fresh look at SEP/WAP monitoring
- PMC examines Weatherization Assistance Program
- Agenda for eastern states PMC Meeting Nov. 15-16
- Texas Industrial Showcase draws near

A PDF version of this newsletter is available at:
https://www.eere-pmc.energy.gov/PMC_Partners.aspx#newsletters

Check your registration with grants.gov

Starting in the current fiscal year (FY07), states are required to use grants.gov to submit grant applications. This means that each state agency or office must first be registered with the site's Central Contracting Registry.

It is crucial that you ensure your state or organization is currently registered and that your registration accurately lists your Authorized Organization Representative (AOR). Only registered AORs can input grant applications into grants.gov.

If your registration is NOT up to date, go to www.grants.gov; click on "Quick Links" on the right side of the page and click "Get Registered".

The registration process involves three basic steps:

1. Register your organization;
2. Become authorized as an AOR by your organization;
3. Register yourself as an Authorized Organization Representative.

Once you have completed the registration process, you will receive e-mail notification from grants.gov confirming the registration process has been completed.

If you need assistance, please contact Elnora Long in the Office of the Weatherization and Intergovernmental Program (OWIP) at 202-586-9700.

Apply for next round of *Energy Savings Assessments*

On October 2, EERE's Office of Industrial Technologies (ITP) opened the application period for the next round of industrial *Energy Savings Assessments*. As a key element of the *Save Energy Now* campaign, this is an excellent opportunity for U.S. industrial and manufacturing plants to make real gains in energy efficiency and save on operating costs at the same time.

In the last year the program uncovered more than \$300 million in total potential savings in industrial process heating and steam systems. Fully implementing the suggested measures could help those plants save 7 percent or more per year on industrial energy bills. Many of the involved plants are already implementing the suggested improvements to save on their bottom-line operating costs.

The focus of the 2007 initiative is to reduce natural gas consumption. For more information on the program, visit: <http://www1.eere.energy.gov/industry/saveenergynow/assessments.html>.

EERE takes a fresh look at SEP/WAP monitoring

EERE staff is reviewing the State Energy Program (SEP) and Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) monitoring procedures used by the former Regional Offices. A 13-person Committee pulled from EERE Headquarters, the Golden Field Office and the National Energy Technology Laboratory will select the best monitoring tools and procedures to be used nationwide by the PMC as part of its monitoring program.

Ronald Shaw, one of the supervisors of the Weatherization and Intergovernmental Program, chairs the SEP and WAP Monitoring Program Committee doing the work. Jim Powell, program manager of OWIP, and former director of the Southeast Regional Office, also participates with the group.

"The idea is to select a uniform set of monitoring tools and procedures to be used by the PMC (both locations) in all states so that we can more effectively monitor SEP and WAP grant activities," Shaw said. "Our committee is represented by a good mix of policy, financial and field staff members who will help establish a sound monitoring program for the PMC."

The committee held its first working session October 4 and hopes to have an initial monitoring program in place by January.

Monitoring visits already scheduled this year will be performed as scheduled, but trips yet to be scheduled will be held off until after the new program is established.

The goal is not to reinvent the wheel, but to harmonize the slightly varying methods and tools used in the past by the regional offices and modify those methods and tools only when needed.

"Our goal is to make better use of limited resources to make each monitoring experience as meaningful as possible to the states and to our own SEP and WAP staff, while performing our statutory requirements," Shaw said.

"If we can keep program activities on tighter track with congressional intent, it will help ensure that federal dollars are well-spent and that end-users receive maximum benefits in improved energy efficiency and wider use of renewables."

PMC examines Weatherization Assistance Program

Few DOE programs provoke stronger emotions than the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP). Advocates feel strongly about its importance in providing low-income people with reduced energy bills and warmer homes while at the same time reducing demand for fossil fuels and electricity for heating and cooling. So, it's understandable that when DOE makes organizational changes that affect the program, stakeholders are going to be concerned.

The creation of the PMC has sparked a variety of reactions from stakeholders, especially the voicing of several concerns about the program. Among those are budget-related travel restrictions, the impacts of those restrictions on monitoring visits, problems with timely cash reimbursements, problems with filing required reports and insufficient staff at NETL to carry out the program. But, are those concerns valid, and if so, what, if anything, is DOE doing about them?

Travel restrictions

Travel restrictions due to tight budgets are posing a challenge for PMC staff, according to Julie Riel, technical advisor to the Golden Field Office manager for issues relating to states. PMC staff will have to look closely at each need for a visit, whether the need is a public event

or a presentation to a stakeholder group, to determine if a DOE presence adds sufficient value to justify the expenditure of tight funds.

"Because of travel restrictions, we're looking at creative ways to maintain the same level of communication we've had with states in the past," said Gary Burch, Golden's Assistant Manager for Intergovernmental Projects and Outreach. "That's going to mean the methods by which we communicate will change. We may do more videoconferences, and we may try webcasts, for example, but one way or another, we're going to keep talking with and supporting the states."

Monitoring

Some states have voiced concerns over whether monitoring visits will continue at the same level they have in the past. Program guidance requires DOE to monitor each state weatherization program via a site visit at least every two years in addition to other on-going oversight.

"The frequency of monitoring visits, including for technical assistance, may change because of tighter budgets," Riel said, "but it will still receive a higher priority than travel for other purposes. We're looking at what is the best level of monitoring and plan to issue guidance on that fairly soon."

Cash Reimbursements

Complaints about slow cash reimbursements have been a complaint reaching PMC staff since the consolidation.

"Some states have complained," said Angela Young, Division Director of NETL's Intergovernmental Projects and Outreach, "but our financial assistance staff has worked directly with them to resolve the issues. In other cases, it was just a matter of getting out the right contact information. Now that our new organization is in place, we've updated the contact list and made it available through the newsletter and the PMC Web site."

Reports

Some states have expressed confusion over required WAP reports, including how and where to submit them. "Reports should be submitted through WinSAGA," said Burch, "but some

people are finding the system confusing, and that may explain why so many are delinquent."

The confusion results from the system's "switch," according to Burch, the way it shifts control for inputting information between the field and DOE. The last person to input information retains control of the "switch" until that person switches it to someone else.

"That can be frustrating for users," Burch said, "but unfortunately, I don't see a quick way around the problem other than explaining to people how the system works. And, confusing or not, the states have to work on reducing the number of delinquent reports and start getting them in on time. We're ready to help them, but they really need to focus on getting the reports in."

NETL Staffing

The consolidation did result in the loss of staff with valuable historical knowledge from the former Southeast, Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regional offices, according to Young. As a result, since then, NETL has assigned two staff members to the WAP.

"We're now in the process of hiring a third WAP project manager," Young said. "This will bring us up to full staffing in this area. Currently, we're using experienced staff from Golden to help train the new NETL staff."

"It's also important to keep in mind the PMC is one organization. If there's a shortfall in resources in one part of it, we can call on resources from another part to help out. We are absolutely committed to maintaining a superior level of service."

In Summary

"We've been on a steep learning curve since the consolidation," Young said. "We've had different rules and different processes to learn. We've had to adjust to working with a greater number of states. We've had to develop a different set of working relationships. But, we have made a lot of progress. There are a lot of internal issues being tackled that stakeholders don't see, including the issues raised at the western states meeting held in August."

Agenda set for eastern states PMC meeting Nov. 15-16

The second PMC-States meeting, this one for the 25 states and territories of the former Northeast, Mid-Atlantic and Southeast regions, will bring together NETL staff and stakeholders on the east coast for the first time since the consolidation.

The meeting at the Sheraton Station Hotel in Pittsburgh, Pa. will give stakeholders a chance to voice concerns and to become more familiar with the organizational structure of the PMC.

Day one will consist of an introduction of staff at NETL and an overview of the lab, including how it fits within the PMC business structure and collaborates with Golden. Participants will discuss financial assistance programs and processes (Grants.gov, WinSaga, STRIPES).

Day two will focus on the major issues identified by states. It will also cover market transformation for energy efficiency and renewable energy, and future direction of EERE. Attendees, if they wish, can tour NETL in the early afternoon.

The meeting follows a similar one held in Golden, Colo. in August, when about 100 state representatives discussed the expanded PMC and EERE's organizational structure and provided feedback for improvement.

For a complete agenda or to make a reservation, visit the PMC Web site at: https://www.eere-pmc.energy.gov/PMC_Partners.aspx#Upcoming_Meetings_Events.

Texas Industrial Showcase draws near

If you want to learn more about saving energy in the petrochemical and refining industries, make it a point to attend the Texas Technology Showcase at the Galveston Island Convention Center, December 6-7 in Galveston, Texas.

This will be the Gulf Coast petrochemical industry's second showcase featuring energy efficiency and up to 500 are expected to attend. The conference will focus on "The

Engineers Energy Toolbox: Practices, Technologies, and Management." Speakers and exhibitors will examine how energy management can contribute toward plant or business efficiency by lowering long-term manufacturing costs.

Topics include:

- Best energy management practices to reduce cost;
- Using the latest technologies;
- Building internal support for energy efficiency within your organization; and
- Meeting NOx emission reduction requirements

The Showcase Exposition Hall will feature 40 experts showcasing technologies and services for energy-efficient and environmental applications. Exhibitors include Chevron Phillips Chemical Company, ExxonMobil, Texas Petrochemicals LP, and the Dow Chemical Company.

Sponsors of the event include Texas Industries of the Future, Texas State Energy Conservation Office, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy.

Registration is now open. For more information, visit www.showcasetexas.org.

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